

# News Release

## **22 arrested during ICE-led operation in Brockton targeting gang members**

BOSTON — U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, working together in Brockton with local law enforcement partners, arrested 11 gang members and associates this week as part of the agency's Operation Community Shield, which targets violent street gangs.

This two-day operation yielded the arrests of 16 U.S. permanent residents whose criminal convictions may render them eligible for deportation, 5 who were illegally residing in the U.S. and 1 who is currently wanted on a warrant of deportation.

"Public safety is a significant part of ICE's role in protecting the homeland, but it is also a shared law enforcement mission," said Bruce M. Foucart, special agent-in-charge of ICE's Office of Investigations in Boston. "ICE works closely with other federal, state, and local law enforcement partners to keep our communities safe, which in this case is the removal of criminal gang members and others who threaten the safety of Brockton neighborhoods."

The operation was conducted in partnership with the Brockton Police Department, the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office, the United States Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Massachusetts Division of Unemployment Assistance, and the Boston, Fall River, Stoughton and Taunton MA Police Departments.

"It is understandable that many from around the globe would want to come to live, work and raise families here in the greatest democracy in the world. However, this must be done in compliance with U.S. immigration laws not in violation of them. Furthermore, we will continue to work cooperatively with our law enforcement partners to pursue those who enter and stay in the United States illegally and disrupt our local communities with their violent criminal behavior," said United States Attorney Michael J. Sullivan.

Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy Cruz said, "These ICE operations are an important tool for those of us fighting crime at the local level. This support from ICE allows us to more effectively do our job of keeping the people of Plymouth County safe".

William Conlon, Brockton Police Chief said, “We are grateful for the cooperation of ICE and the other partnering agencies to help to rid the city of a criminal element that causes a disproportionate amount of problems for the people who are lawfully here.”

The foreign nationals arrested as part of this latest Operation Community Shield enforcement action are linked to local street gangs. ICE agents also arrested, or assisted in the arrest of 11 other individuals on federal and/or state criminal violations, including administrative immigration violations, who were encountered during the gang operation.

Those arrested as part of this local gang operation are foreign nationals from Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Colombia, Dominican Republic and Haiti. The criminal histories of those arrested include charges and/or convictions for Armed Assault, Assault to Kill, Racketeering, Assault and Battery Dangerous Weapon, Assault and Battery, Indecent Assault and Battery, Armed Carjacking, Witness Intimidation, Breaking and Entering, Receiving Stolen Property, Larceny, Malicious Destruction of Property, as well as numerous other weapons and narcotics related crimes.

Operation Community Shield is a national law enforcement initiative launched by ICE in 2005 that brings all of ICE’s law enforcement powers to bear in the fight against violent transnational street gangs. It is part of a comprehensive approach to work with our law enforcement partners at the federal, state and local level to combat gang violence and make our communities safer. Since its inception, Operation Community Shield has led to more than 8,900 arrests nationwide. In Boston/New England ICE agents have arrested 322 as part of this initiative.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*